**DOCUMENT RESUME**

ED 169 984 JC 790 283

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TITLE Management and Governance in the Two-Year College.
PUB DATE 2 May 79
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (59th, Chicago, Illinois, April 29-May 2, 1979)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Collective Bargaining; College Administration; *College Faculty; Community Colleges; *Governance; Governing Boards; *Junior Colleges; *Teacher Administrator Relationship; Teacher Responsibility; *Unions

ABSTRACT

The long-standing ideology of governance practices among higher education institutions is the collegial or shared authority model. The essence of this practice is the autonomy and self-regulation of the conditions under which the professional faculty operate, in return for which the professional accepts responsibility toward his/her client. Problems with this system lie in the difficulties in maintaining trust between the president, governing board, and faculty; and in gaining the willingness of administrators and faculty to give the time required by the system. The general two-year college governance pattern may be characterized as a mix of bureaucratic and political models, rather than a collegial one. Due to lack of tradition, the unchartered place of two-year colleges in higher education, and the instability of the environment, there has been a trend among two-year college faculty to unionize. Approximately one-fourth of college faculty members belong to collective bargaining unions; two-year college faculties constitute the majority. In recent years, the trend toward collective bargaining agreements has stabilized. As a mode of governance, it remains unacceptable to those professors who have enjoyed the essence of professionalism in self-regulation. Governing boards and institutional administrators have an important role to play in relation to unionization, and need to understand the purposes of a union and the norms that undergird a successful collective bargaining process. (ME)

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JC 790 283

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# MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

Robert E. Lahti

There are approximately three thousand higher educational institutions in the United States with widely differing modes of internal governance. Some are characterized by a rigid bureaucratic structure while at the other extreme are colleges and universities governed collegially where authority and responsibility are shared by faculty, administration, and governing boards in a loosely structured arrangement. The majority of colleges probably fall between the two aforementioned extremes of governance.

The long-standing ideology of governance practices among higher education institutions is the collegial or shared authority model. The collegial mode is basically an expression that faculty members constitute a group of professional practitioners whose skills are so highly specialized that only they are competent to decide who should become a part of the group and evaluate each others performance. The essence of this practice is autonomy and self-regulation of the conditions under which the profession shall operate, in return, for which the professional accepts a form of responsibility toward his/her clients. Shared authority or the collegial form of governance often suffers from what ought to be rather than what is. For the most part, it is an ideology of the exceptional rather than the general. Baratz[1] identifies four reasons why this mode of governance is exceptional in its application to higher education institutions rather than the mode.

1. The system of shared authorty or collegiality is grounded on tacit understandings and its viability depends most heavily on mutual trust between the president, governing board, and the faculty. This trust relationship is a challenge to achieve.
2. When things are going well, i.e., there are adequate finances, human resources, enrollment is stable, and a growth curve is still operable, mutual trust is easier to sustain. However, in difficult times of limited resources, unstable enrollment, saturated teacher employment markets, etc., mutual trust is more difficult to sustain.
3. Comparatively few members of any faculty are willing to forego the pleasures of teaching, scholarship, artistic work, etc., in favor of spending long hours mastering the intricacies of budgets, personnel records, curricula, parking problems, etc.
4. Administrators under the pressure of timely decisions are often unwilling to delay decision making until they can assemble a group of professors or teachers who have intricate schedules and who are known in advance to have unique points-of-view regarding the operation and management of a collegiate institution.

One can observe across higher education that collegial, or shared governance has remained the most stable in those institutions

who have had a long-standing application of the norms that undergird the process. The respective constituents of the institution have been able to maintain and give full faith and credit to each others rights and responsibilities in the areas in which they separately and collectively confer. Since community colleges are the youngest vintage of higher education, it might logically follow that collegial governance has few roots or traditions except in the two-year private college of longer duration. The general two-year college governance pattern might be more appropriately characterized as a greater mix of bureaucratic and political than collegial.

It is significant to note that all constituents must understand and have a working knowledge of the three most common images of governance if any one of the governance patterns is to be viable for institutional use. Should an institution decide that shared authority is a mode of academic governance it wishes to practice, the (Statement on Governance of College and University drafted in 1977 by the AAUP/ACE/AGB) might constitute the most significant document to be utilized as a guideline. Should the constituents of an institution decide that the bureaucratic or hierarchal form of governance is the mode of academic decision making they wish to pursue, Herbert Stroup's book Bureaucracy in Higher Education might be a helpful guide in applying the bureaucratic paradigm. Many new sources of information are developing

with the third and most recent image of governance - the political.

Because of the lack of tradition, the uncharted place in the higher educational hierarchy, the instability of the environment created by the war years and the many other external influences on the community college, there has been a significant trend among faculties of the two-year colleges to unionize. Collective bargaining (political) as a form of governance is the most recent phenomenon dating from the 1960's to the present. Approximately one-fourth of the Nation's faculty members belong to collective bargaining unions and approximately one-third of the Nation's campuses are now governed through collective bargaining agreements.

Two year college faculties and campuses constitute the majority in both the above categories. In most recent years the trend toward greater number of higher education collective bargaining agreements has seemed to stabilize. Because of this stabilization, it appears that collective bargaining as a governance mode in higher education is not inevitable because it remains unacceptable to those professors who have enjoyed the essence of professionalism characterized by autonomy and self regulation.

The preponderance of collective bargaining contracts in higher education are in the two-year sector. A discussion of management, unions, and the board role in a governance process that is characterized by political images or collective bargaining might be helpful. Needless to say, there is not total concurrence between union and management officials on their respective roles because in the collective bargaining process role definition and responsibility

is the substance and catalyst for the bargaining process. Be that as it may, the following information portrays a rather commonly accepted role for administration, board and unions. It additionally suggests the maturity of thought and action which an educational manager must accept about a union when collective bargaining becomes involved in the governance process.

BROADLY CONCEPTUALIZED ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

A. Before unionization

1. Develop policy
2. Develop procedures and regulations
3. Direct and coordinate all staff.

B. After contract negotiations have been completed

1. Develop policy
2. Develop procedures and regulations
3. Direct and coordinate all staff
4. Administer the official contract.

CONCEPTUALIZED ROLE OF GOVERNING BOARD

A. The principal functions of a Board of Trustees generally established by statute or charter are:

1. Boards ensure that the institution is financially solvent.
2. Boards provide for the good administration of the campus through the appointment and dismissal of executive officers.
3. Boards monitor the quality of instruction, research, and student performance.
4. Boards serve as the "court of last resort" by resolving internal disputes among administrators, faculty and students.

5. Boards act as a buffer between the institution and society, ideally protecting the best interests of both.

6. Boards set and monitor policy for the organization.

B. More specific powers, duties and rights of Boards generally extend from statutory authority as follows:

1. Direct the work of its faculty and other employees.

2. Hire, evaluate, promote, demote, transfer, assign, reassign and retain faculty employees.

3. Suspend, discipline, or discharge faculty employees for proper cause.

4. Maintain the efficiency of its operations.

5. Relieve its employees from duties because of lack of work, financial exigency, program change, or other legitimate reasons.

6. Determine and implement methods, means assignments, reassignments and personnel by which its operations are to be conducted.

7. Take such actions as may be necessary to carry out its mission as the governing board of the state system of community colleges.

8. Manage the physical facilities under its control, including any alteration, relocation, or new construction thereof.

9. Initiate, prepare, certify, and administer its budgets.

Educational managers are obligated to accept Board role and responsibilities and at the same time become students of the collective bargaining process if they are to cope effectively with the political model of governance. A mature state of mind about unionism is essential. When collective bargaining gains access to formal decision making, the more adept an educational manager is at accepting the realities and learning the norms of the process the longer may be his or her tenure and good health.

Ron Bush, Vice Chancellor of Maricopa College in Phoenix, Arizona, suggests sixteen purposes to which unions are dedicated and with which this writer agrees. An educational manager first experiencing collective bargaining might profit from keeping the following checklist of union purposes in close proximity to his desk as a reference for better understanding the different activities of unions engaging in the political process.

BASIC PURPOSES OF A UNION

1. Sell membership
2. Achieve more for less
3. Job security (insurance)
4. Test the boundaries of the contract
5. Win grievances
6. Influence decision makers
7. Engage in union politics
8. Protect membership from administrators
9. Preserve the dignity of the individual (collective bargaining)
10. Maintain balance of power
11. Protect Due Process
12. Political action
13. Lobbying
14. Career ladder
15. Stay in power
16. Social outlet

After reviewing the aforementioned list an educational manager might have concern for the loss or erosion of power of the Board and the administration. This kind of reaction might be considered normal and perceptive but should not lead to panic. It should be kept in mind that collective bargaining is a negotiating process between employees and management on matters on which there is generally a different perspective of who should make the final decision. Kemerer and Baldridge[4] offer the following comments regarding the loss of administrative power in the publication Unions on Campus.

> Faculty unionism is one of many problems administrators must face in managing institutions that are rapidly changing under the onslaught of environmental pressures. Many administrators perceive collective bargaining as a threat to their management power and fear that campus polarization will make effective decision making virtually impossible. Paradoxically, evidence from the Stanford project shows that faculty collective bargaining actually affords greater - not less - power to certain administrative components.

If college professors were given a choice of governance by collegiality or governance by collective bargaining the majority would more than likely select the shared authority model of collegiality because of the professional peer and autonomous relationships long enjoyed by college faculty. The collegial norms are also more compatible with the humane values attached to the learning process. Because of environmental changes which are eroding the autonomous nature of colleges and universities through greater external surveillance mechanisms and less acceptance of autonomous peer judgments of their professional work, collective bargaining is being considered as a more protective mode of

academic governance in many higher education institutions.

Should it replace or become the predominant pattern of academic governance, then it will be equally important for faculty and administration to understand and respect the norms that undergird a successful collective bargaining process just as many have nurtured the norms that have made the shared authority model work.

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